



Mountain Ear

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF THE ROCKY MOUNTAINEERS
OF WESTERN MONTANA

December, 1988

MONTHLY MEETING

Time and Place: 7:30 p.m. on Wednesday, December 14, 1988, in the Montana Power Building at 1903 Russell Street in Missoula.

Program: Stephen Arno, a Forest Service biologist and the author of books on the Timberline and Northwest Trees, will give a slide show and talk on the forest fires of 1988 and their implications for residents of the Northern Rockies. He will talk about how we can live with our fire-dependent forests. This talk will give you a greater appreciation for the forces at work (besides gravity and frustration) the next time you are clambering through some "Class Five" deadfalls.

TRIP CALENDAR

Sunday, December 18: A moderately strenuous ski mountaineering trip up Boulder Peak in the Bitterroot Mountains Southwest of Darby. Boulder Peak is immediately south of Trapper Peak. Call Dave Pengelly, 728-6512, for details.

Friday, December 23, Lolo Pass Area: A ski tour starting from Lolo Pass and coming out the East Fork of Lolo Creek, near the Lolo Hot Springs. A fairly long trip, but suitable for touring equipment. Call Dan Weinstein, 549-6844, for details.

Christmas Weekend: If you are interested in doing some area skiing over the Christmas weekend, probably at Schweitzer Basin or Big Mountain, call Art Gidel, 543-6352. Remember, due to recent technological advances that some of you may not be aware of, it is not necessary to climb up in order to ski down.

December 31-January 2, Little Saint Joe Cabin. Backcountry skiing and partying during the annual New Years Eve trip to the Club's rustic cabin on Little Saint Joe in the Bitterroot Mountains. Come check out the cabin improvements made last October. Call Ralph Flockerzi, 549-9886, for details .

Around January 1, 1989, Mt. Cleveland. An attempt to climb Mt. Cleveland (10,466) in Glacier Park. A challenging 4-5 day trip. For details call Steve Niday, 721-3790.

Saturday, January 7, Glen Peak: Moderately strenuous ski mountaineering trip up the mountain above Glen Lake and Hidden Lake in the Bitterroot Mountains. This is the mountain to the north of Gash Point. Call Dan Weinstein, 549-6844, for details.

Saturday, January 14, Sweeny Peak: A moderately strenuous ski mountaineering trip up Sweeny Peak in the Bitterroot Mountains. Call Art Gidel, 543-6352, for details.

Sunday, January 15, Stuart Peak: A moderately strenuous ski mountaineering trip up Stuart Peak in the Rattlesnake Wilderness Area. Call Joe Knotek, 549-2040, for details.

Christmas, 1989, Mount Kilimanjaro, Kenya: Pat Caffrey (author of The Climber's Guide to Montana) will lead a two-week trip to Mount Kilimanjaro. He estimates a total cost of about \$3,000.00. Call Pat at 677-2661 for details, or talk to him when he gives his slide show at the January meeting.

TRIP SUGGESTIONS

Last year, what with one thing and another, I didn't do much winter camping, and I am not, by golly, going to let that happen again this year. Below are some winter trips that I have had my eye on for a while. I would like to schedule some of these trips, starting in February or so when the days get a bit longer and warmer. Give me a call at 728-8101 if you are interested in any of the proposed outings. - Peter Dayton.

Hyalite Ridge: A four or so day trip down a long, high, undulating ridge in the Hyalite Mountains south of Bozeman. Go in around Hyalite Reservoir, come out on the Gallatin River.

Flint Creek Range: A fairly laid back two or three day trip in the Flint Creek Range, which is south of Drummond and West of Deer Lodge. Lots of lakes, lots of interesting mountains to climb, easy access up logging roads. I'd like to do a loop or a door-to-door trip through several basins, possibly pulling a mountaineering sled for the sake of novelty.

Jewel Basin. A two or three day backcountry tour through the Jewel Basin, which is east of Big Fork. The terrain is not too steep, the trees are quite open, so the skiing should be fun.

Tweedy Peak: Two years ago we set out to climb Tweedy Peak, the highest mountain in the East Pioneers, which are Northwest of Dillon, but instead climbed Torrey Peak (seven feet lower) due to the high avalanche danger. I'd like to take another run at Tweedy, and maybe do it as a two or three day tour. There are thirteen peaks over 10,000 feet high in this range, and we could do a door-to-door trip across the mountains, from Birch Creek to Elkhorn Hot Springs or visa versa. I even know of some old cabins that we might be able to camp in.

Beartooth Plateau: How about an extended ski tour on the Beartooth Plateau, north of Yellowstone Park?

Columbia Ice Fields: Get in a bit of glacier travel and tour around on the Columbia Ice Fields up by Jasper and Banf Parks. Might be a good spring trip.

TRIP REPORTS

Great Northern Peak, October 29: Art Gidel, Rick Murney, and I [Steve Niday] left Missoula at 3:30 a.m. and arrived at the Stanton Creek trailhead, marked with a small Forest Service sign on Highway 2, around 6:30 a.m. Shortly after leaving the highway we came to the end of the driveable road. Heading out in the dark didn't seem like the best plan since we were a little unsure of which trail to take, so we took a nap and left when it got light enough to see. There is what looks like a trail, but which on closer inspection turned out to be a partially overgrown road, to the northwest. The trail, which looks more like a trail than the other trail, which is really a road, leaves this junction in a southwesterly direction. The trail rises quickly, then drops into the Stanton Lake Basin in about a mile. The trail seems to end after about 3.5

miles on the northwest side of Stanton Creek. On the way up we continued through the brush, generally on the northwest side of the creek, until reaching a large complex of beaver ponds at about 4,600 feet. We went around the east side of these and then looked for the easiest route up the slopes to the southwest. The next 1,500 feet of elevation gain was a matter of following the path of least resistance up a steep hill covered with alder, devils club, and other assorted plants. Curving around to the southeast, we finally left the alder and headed up the talus slopes to the terminus of the middle tongue of Stanton Glacier. There are some crevasses to avoid, but the going was easy and did not require the use of crampons or rope. We climbed up 1,500 feet of gentle slopes, and the snow/ice ends just a few feet short of the top of the summit ridge. We climbed the middle point, which turned out to be about the same height as the east point but slightly lower than the west point. We decided not to spend any more time climbing the other points and thus give ourselves a better chance of getting out that night. Art suggested that we use this opportunity to practice bivouacing, but was overruled. We glissaded the glacier on our butts and did a controlled fall down the steep alder slope into the beaver pond basin. We did find a trail along the east side of Stanton Creek just below the ponds, which led us down for a mile or so. That saved us some time and effort, and we reached the main trail a few minutes before darkness. Using headlamps, we arrived at the car around 9:00 p.m.

The weather was great all day, and it stayed cold enough to keep the light snow cover relatively dry. The trip was very enjoyable in spite of the brush, and the views of Glacier Park and Hungry Horse Reservoir were especially scenic with the new snow. Stimson looked quite impressive. Thanks to Art and Rick for maintaining a good attitude, which seemed to be essential to making this a fun trip. - Steve Niday

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